

The Society of Washington Artists' Exhibit



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Twelfth Annual Exhibition Opens Tomorrow in the Hemicycle of the Corcoran Gallery of Art--Finest Pictures Ever Offered to the Public by Local Painters--Much Work Shown by Out-of-Town Men--A Splendid Collection of High-Class Evenly-Balanced Work--Place of Honor Given to Wiles.

THE twelfth annual exhibition of the Society of Washington Artists will open tomorrow in the hemicycle of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. As those who were fortunate enough to attend the private view last night will know, the "show" is by far the finest that our Washington painters have ever offered to the public.

This remark has been made about practically all the recent exhibits the society has held, so that the unobservant hearer may have judged that it was merely the complimentary thing to say about every exhibit. To the art lovers here in Washington who take more pride in our local exhibitions, however, and who have carefully studied the various exhibitions, this will prove an actual fact, greatly to the credit of Washington painters, instead of a complimentary platitude.

Standard Steadily Raised.

Ever since the society began holding its exhibitions in the Corcoran, and showing, with the local work, that of out-of-town artists, the standard of their show has been steadily raised, until now it is a veritable American salon.

The best work of our Washington painters compares very favorably with the work shown at the New York and other great art exhibitions, and when to these pictures are added the choicest of those shown at the big exhibits the resulting collection cannot but stand on equal footing with any in the country.

Few Pictures Hung.

This year's show is not a large one, only fifty or sixty pictures being hung, and of these quite a number from out of town contributors. With the idea in mind to have but a small exhibition, which should contain nothing but the choicest, the jury has shown admirable judgment, and the pictures from Washington artists are remarkably well chosen.

Not a single picture is there on the line which is not worthy of a place in any exhibition in the country, and inestimable advantage of a small exhibition—every picture is on the line. If a picture is worth hanging at all it is worth hanging well. And this policy will do as much as any one thing to give our exhibition its proper rank as a national instead of a local affair.

The American Salon.

A glance at the catalogue will show to the incredulous that this exhibit deserves the name of the American Salon, and a glance at the pictures will show to every-

one who can appreciate good art that our home "show" is no longer to be disparagingly spoken of.

In the position of honor, the centre of the semi-circular wall, hangs the picture which was given the position of honor at the New York Academy this year, Irving R. Wiles' portrait of Miss Julia Marlowe. A little to the right of this hangs the picture which was awarded the highest medal of the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburgh last year, a striking example of the work of Alfred H. Maurer. H. H. Brockenkamp shows his picture, which won a bronze medal at the Pan-American Exposition, and Thomas Eakins a portrait which won a gold medal at the same exhibition.

A Wonderful Picture.

Add to these pictures "Sita and Sarita," Cecilia Beaux's wonderful picture of a woman with a black cat; pictures by Childe Hassam, Kenyon Cox, Bolton Jones, and C. H. Davis, and the exhibition becomes truly a great national one, in which the work of our local artists is more prominent by reason of its artistic charm than by mere superiority of numbers.

This great success is due to the indefatigable efforts of the officers and executive committee of the society, and especially to Mr. Brooke, who personally secured the majority of the out-of-town exhibits. And every art lover in Washington should be grateful to them for this opportunity to see how well our own work compares with the best.

Tasteful Hanging.

As one enters the gallery one is impressed with the tasteful hanging of the pictures. While we are all interested in the work of our sculptors, they are so few in number that their work, quite undisturbed, appears insignificant when shown with so many paintings, and we think the management should receive quite as much commendation as blame for omitting the sculpture.

For their aim should be, above all, to have the exhibition, as a whole, harmonious. In this they have succeeded admirably, and as a result each picture in the room can be seen well, in as good a light as is possible in the hemicycle, and, with remarkably few exceptions, neighboring

pictures enhance, rather than detract from each other.

"Evenness" of Exhibit.

As to the artistic merit of the pictures shown, the most noticeable thing is the "evenness" in point of excellence. In commenting on the pictures, it would, for this reason, be difficult to select any few of them for especially favorable remark, and equally hard to find an opportunity for adverse criticism.

In portraiture, to many minds the highest branch of the painter's art, the exhibition is notable. Several of the out-of-town contributors have sent fine portraits, and it is in this branch of art, too, that many of our Washington painters, especially our women artists, excel.

Place of Honor.

The place of honor has been given to Irving R. Wiles' life-size portrait of Miss Julia Marlowe. Painted with a freedom and simplicity of technique, and yet with remarkable realism, Miss Marlowe, a very beautiful and modern brunette, leans forward on the settee on which she is seated and looks right out of the canvas at the observer. She is garbed in white satin, trimmed just enough to relieve the severity, a single rose in her bosom, and just a suggestion of the gleam of gold and jewels at her belt and about her comely arms.

Last year this artist's portrait of his father and mother took the "Corcoran Gallery first prize." His picture this year is not so subtle in its feeling as last year's prize-winner, the realism in its rendering entirely unnecessary the use of the imaginative faculty of the observer. In just so much is this picture of Miss Marlowe less artistic than his former one of his parents. It is, none the less, a great picture, and an honor to the exhibition.

Spencer B. Nichols' Work.

Spencer B. Nichols shows a portrait of his brother. It is a large canvas, and, though unobtrusive in color, one of the most striking portraits. It is a three-quarter length figure, standing in an easy pose, in a room, evidently a studio from its furnishings, dimly lighted by a small curtained window, against which the figure is in dark relief. For graceful composition and low, pleasing coloring, it is without a peer in the gallery.

Miss Mueden shows a portrait of "Lady in Gray." It is done with her customary exquisite draftsmanship, and is charming



IN NORMANDY

ing in color. It has not, however, the same degree of charm which marked her "Jocasta," shown in the recent Water Color Club exhibit.

Two Panel Portraits.

Mrs. Child shows two panel portraits in pastel, one of a woman, the other of a man. They are both done in the same style, the face in each being in the high light, while the figure blends into a very dark background. Mrs. Child's work is always artistic and interesting, and these portraits are no exception to the general rule. Pastel seems to be the favorite medium for our women artists, Miss Juliet Thompson and Miss Anna Sands also showing very creditable portraits in pastel.

With the portraits should be mentioned

Cecilia Beaux's "Sita and Sarita," the famous woman with the black cat. It would be impertinence to describe such a well-known picture by such a noted artist. One not familiar with the name, Cecilia Beaux, should study the annals of contemporary art. As for the picture, it must be seen to be appreciated. It is, without question, "the" picture of the exhibition, and, alone, is well worth a visit to the gallery.

A Peculiar Coincidence.

By a peculiar coincidence in hanging, directly across the room, so that the two cats eye each other with all the intensity of their yellow-green eyes, is Mr. H. Hobart Nichols' "Hildegard and Bob"—Bob being a black cat. Except in artistic merit, the two pictures have nothing in



ST. AGNES



HILDEGARDE & BOB

GRANDMOTHER'S BOA

common, Mr. Nichols' picture being of a little girl, and dreamy, restful, and imaginative in its treatment.

To the art student and to the old and experienced painter alike, Alfred H. Maurer's "An Arrangement" will prove a revelation. Seen from a distance it has all the appearance of a careful realistic study, but if one examine it at all closely it will be found to have been painted with more broadness and freedom than any other picture in the gallery. It was this picture which was awarded the medal at the Carnegie Institute last year. Other interesting portraits are those by Harold MacDonald, Prince Troubetzkoy, and Thomas Eakins.

Genre and Figure Pictures.

The genre and figure pictures are not numerous, Kenyon Cox's classical "Annunciation" being the most notable. This is so soft in coloring that, although it is high-keyed, it loses most of its charm by being near more striking pictures.

In the decorative work comes William Fuller Curtis' burnt wood panel and Mrs. Barney's head of Medusa. Mr. Curtis' panel, "Saint Agnes of Monte Pulciano," is a splendid example of art in burnt wood. The gliding of the halo and figure of the virgin, however, may prove a jarring note to many. Mrs. Barney's "Medusa" is a weird conception, done with her accustomed vigor and freedom, but lacking the dignity with which the ancients clothed their goddesses.

Numerous Landscapes.

As usual, most of the Washington men are represented by landscapes. The jury which awarded the "Parsons prize" had no easy task to select one from the nu-

merous excellent works. The friends of Mr. Brooke, Mr. Well, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Moser, and Mr. Weller will all find much to admire. The Washington artists are to be congratulated on having made such a remarkably fine showing.

Their work is no instance is below the standard set by the out of town men. These out of town men have among their numbers, too, many of the best-known modern painters. R. M. Shurtleff has sent one of his choicest interpretations of the woods in midsummer; Ben Foster, Potthast, Childe Hassam, Bruce Crane, and Whitman being represented by typically excellent canvases.

Former Washingtonian's Work.

Of the artists who formerly made Washington their home, Parker Mann and Everett Warner are represented, the sketch sent by the latter, however, scarcely being up to his earlier performances. But the men are not the only ones to offer creditable landscape work. Mrs. Andrews shows a pastel entitled "Buckwheat Harvest," which is not only very pleasing in color, but also possesses that charm and sympathy which so few landscape pictures have.

The exhibition of miniatures is not so large or so notable as in former years. Miss Perry's and Miss Thompson's works being the only representatives of the dainty art.

The exhibition will remain open until the 20th of this month, and certainly should not be missed by anyone interested in art in Washington. To the connoisseur it will be a rare enjoyment; to the painter, instruction and encouragement alike, while the general public cannot fail to be pleased with it.

INTERESTING CHAT IN WASHINGTON CAMERA CIRCLES.

THE removal of Foundry Methodist Episcopal Church calls to mind the changes which are constantly occurring in this city—changes that without the aid of photography it would be difficult to record. Some of the members of the Camera Club have made several negatives of the exterior and interior of this old landmark, in order that the associations of the past might be preserved by these records.

It is astonishing how very few negatives are made of the historic buildings of Washington, or, at least, how few of these negatives can be obtained when the demand for them arises. Some two years ago the Camera Club, in the preparation of a set of Washington lantern slides, found it very difficult to secure suitable negatives of the David Burns cottage, the Blaine residence on Lafayette Square, and of some other buildings which had been removed within a very few years.

Doubtless many negatives had been made of these places before they were torn down, but to find the negatives when wanted seemed to be next to impossible. I wonder if any good negatives are in existence of "Stewart Castle," for many years one of the picturesque landmarks of the city, and of Joaquin Miller's log cabin, a little distance from Sixteenth Street, where the "poet of the Sierras" made his Washington home for some

time? There is good money in making and preserving negatives of Washington homes, and if the camerist will only wait a little while he will find that such negatives become more and more valuable as the years go by.

As an instance of the demand for photographic plates in this country, it is worthy of notice that the house of Lumiere of France has purchased a large tract of land near Burlington, Vt., for the purpose of erecting a large factory for the manufacture of photographic plates in this country. This is an ingenious method of bringing a foreign plate into brisk competition with an American product at a saving of the duty of 25 per cent charged upon photographic plates of foreign make. As the glass upon which the photographic emulsion is coated is imported, the manufacturers will have to pay a duty ranging from 1% to 1 1/2 cents per pound on the glass used.

It seems strange that it should be necessary to import such a common article as glass for the manufacture of photographic plates, but the fact remains that it is much cheaper to do so than to use the American product, for five dollars invested in glass made in Belgium will purchase as much glass of the grade needed as eight dollars invested in American glass; quite a neat saving to the

manufacturer when we consider that one third of the expense of the photographic plate is contained in the glass used.

Customs duties are somewhat amusing when we apply them to some phases of photography. If you purchase an American plate and take it with you into Canada, you must pay a duty to the Canadian Government. This duty is returnable to you upon convincing the Canadian customs officials that you are taking home with you the articles upon which you have paid a duty upon entering Canada.

So far things seem about even, but on your return to this country you are obliged to pay a duty of 45 per cent on your American plates upon the theory that they have been improved abroad. When we consider the many failures that the amateur usually brings home with him after an outing of this kind it seems at times as though we are paying fancy prices upon alleged improvements.

The question is frequently asked, "When will we be able to photograph in colors?" This is one of the questions that is much easier asked than answered. Color photography is, however, an accomplished fact, although the present results are not in the form that we usually expect photographs to be presented in. At the present time, although much has been accom-

plished in this direction, it is not possible to make a photographic print upon paper bearing the colors of the object photographed.

The work of Lippman and Lumiere has given us upon a glass plate all of the colors of the objects photographed, but this work has to be viewed at an angle in order to present the sensation of color, and such samples as I have seen have been so small that they are of but little value except to demonstrate that color photography is possible.

The color work of Joly and McDonald, while extremely interesting and comparatively simple in its method of manipulation, was nevertheless dependent upon a backing of a transparent substance ruled with the three primary colors before the sensation of color could be conveyed, and this process could hardly be classed as color photography.

By the lives process and the Sanger Shepherd process the greatest utility of color photography at the present time has been realized. In this process three negatives are made each through a color screen intended to graduate the colors that when prints from these negatives have been made upon gelatine films, and the films toned to represent the different colors found in the scene used, the sensation of color can be produced by plac-

ing the three films together one over the other, and in this form they can be utilized as lantern slides and correct colors projected upon a screen by the ordinary lime light lantern.

The value of the camera as an educator is being thoroughly tested in one of the grammar schools in Boston. In this school it has been tested in connection with the study of civil government and nature study, and the additional interest shown by the pupils when photography has been used as a help, has proven the wisdom of the experiment.

The plan seems to be that each child shall have a camera; that the negatives shall be exposed during the noon recess, and the developing and printing done at the schoolhouse after school. While this plan must bring added labor to both pupil and teacher the recompense of greater interest and more rapid progress will no doubt fully compensate for the additional trouble.

The use of photography in the manual training school has been demonstrated in Providence, R. I., where the instructor in manual training introduced it as a study with gratifying results. In this case the instructor feeling the need of, and this line of work fitted himself to such an extent that he was able to guide the pupils intelligently in their studies.

It is to be hoped that upon the completion of the new home for manual training in this city some attention will be paid to giving instruction in photography. The study of this art could be combined with the study of physics and chemistry in such a manner that each study would be made far more attractive by its relation to the other studies, and as the present superintendent of manual training, Mr. John A. Chamberlain, is somewhat accustomed to the use of the camera there is opportunity for testing the value of the camera as an educational factor.

A possibility that it may be taught in the school as a useful art in which all might be benefited by some knowledge obtained at school to be applied in later years as a means of livelihood.

The lecture before the Audubon Society on Tuesday night by Francis Hobart Herriek amply illustrated the great help that photography has given to the study of wild birds and animals. Judging from the photographic results obtained by Mr. Herriek he combines with his other attainments not only a vast amount of knowledge of the technique of photography, but an inexhaustible stock of patience.

Many of Mr. Herriek's studies of birds are made from a small portable tent which he locates near the nest of the

birds whose habits he desires to study, and in this tent with his camera in readiness and focused upon the nest the naturalist waits until the proper position is assumed by the birds and the exposure can be made.

The lens used for this work by Mr. Herriek is selected with reference to its focal length when considered with the distance between the camera and the nest. Two of his lenses are well known to amateurs, the Zeiss Anastigmat Series II and the Convertible Anastigmat Series VII. The greatest difficulty in the selection of apparatus for this work is in finding a shutter that is rapid enough to secure the picture without showing the movement of the birds photographed, and also noiseless or so nearly so that the birds will not be frightened away before the series of views can be completed.

The lecture hall of Columbian University was far too small to accommodate those who attended the lecture, all the seating capacity and standing room was occupied, and many were unable to gain admission to the hall. Mr. Herriek illustrated his lecture with lantern slides, of which he has several hundred, illustrating the habits of the different birds from the smaller birds such as the wren and chickadee, to the larger birds such as the eagle and hawk.

The lecture was given in an easy conversational manner showing an intimate acquaintance with bird life and habits, and an enthusiasm with the subject in hand only obtained from close study and diligent observation of the many varied traits of character of the different birds.